



## STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

P.O. BOX 83720  
BOISE, IDAHO 83720-0027

TOM LUNA  
STATE SUPERINTENDENT  
PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

**July 17, 2008**

**TO:** Superintendents, Principals, Business Managers, Charter School Administrators, Title I Directors, Special Education Directors, Testing Coordinators, Technology Coordinators and Public Information Officers

**FROM:** Tom Luna, Superintendent of Public Instruction

**RE:** Weekly E-Newsletter

### **IN THIS REPORT:**

- **Department releases Spring 2008 IRI scores**
- **New materials for the 2008-2009 IRI**
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### **DEPARTMENT RELEASES SPRING 2008 IRI SCORES (GO TO TOP)**

Scores from the Spring 2008 Idaho Reading Indicator (IRI) show Idaho students improved their reading skills throughout the 2007-2008 school year, Superintendent of Public Instruction Tom Luna announced this week.

"Reading skills are critical to a student's academic success, and I am proud of the many Idaho students who made great strides in reading this year," Superintendent Luna said.

The IRI was designed to measure students' reading skills in kindergarten through third grade and helps teachers quickly identify students who are struggling in reading so they can provide them with the remediation necessary to bring them up to grade level. In the 2007-2008 school year, the state implemented a new IRI that reflects more current research in reading education and serves as a better measurement of student performance for teachers in the classroom.

The IRI is conducted three times a year in the fall, winter and spring and is graded on a three-point scale: Benchmark, Strategic or Intensive. A "Benchmark" score means the student is scoring on grade-level in reading. A "Strategic" or "Intensive" grade means a student is performing near grade level or below grade level, respectively. The Legislature allocates \$2.8 million a year for the Idaho Reading Initiative and more than \$1.5 million of that will fund remediation programs for students who struggled with reading this year.

Under the new IRI, students in all K-3 grades showed significant improvements in reading from the beginning of the school year in Fall 2007 test to the Spring 2008. In first grade, for example, the number of students who reached grade level in reading increased from 57 percent in the fall to 74 percent in the spring. In third grade, the number of students who reached grade level jumped from 61 percent in the fall to 71 percent in the spring.

"Still, despite the significant growth in scores across the board, I am concerned that nearly 30 percent of our students have not yet reached grade-level by the end of third grade," Superintendent Luna said. "My staff and I are continuing



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to work hard to address this issue and ensure all Idaho students are equipped with the reading skills they need to be successful in school and beyond.”

The following is a comparison of the percentage of students who scored at grade-level on the Fall, Spring and Winter IRI during the 2007-2008 school year:

<b><u>Grade</u></b>	<b><u>Fall 2007</u></b>	<b><u>Winter 2008</u></b>	<b><u>Spring 2008</u></b>
Kindergarten	56 percent	71 percent	72 percent
1 <sup>st</sup> Grade	57 percent	67 percent	74 percent
2 <sup>nd</sup> Grade	62 percent	65 percent	69 percent
3 <sup>rd</sup> Grade	61 percent	67 percent	71 percent

For more information about IRI scores at schools and school districts across the state, please visit [http://www.sde.idaho.gov/site/reading\\_indicator/](http://www.sde.idaho.gov/site/reading_indicator/).

### **NEW MATERIALS FOR THE 2008-2009 IRI (GO TO TOP)**

Please remember the State Department of Education is mailing new testing materials for the 2008-2009 Idaho Reading Indicator. Do not use testing materials from the previous school year to administer the IRI in 2008-2009. Old materials may be used as practice guides.

If you have any questions, please contact Jenny Fisk, Reading Coordinator, at (208) 332-6927 or [JFisk@sde.idaho.gov](mailto:JFisk@sde.idaho.gov).

### **SUPERINTENDENT'S SCHEDULE (GO TO TOP)**

- Superintendent Luna will attend the groundbreaking of a new school in the Caldwell School District at 9 a.m. on Wednesday, July 23.
- Superintendent Luna will speak at the Idaho Summit on Educational Excellence for Hispanic Students conference at 9 a.m. on Thursday, July 24 in Boise.

### **WHAT'S NEW (GO TO TOP)**

- **Kuna awarded PEP grant** – The Kuna Joint School District was recently awarded a Physical Education Program (PEP) grant. Kuna School District will receive nearly \$77,000 from the U.S. Department of Education through this grant. The Carol M. White Physical Education Program (PEP) provides grants to initiate, expand and improve physical education programs for K-12 students in order to help them make progress toward meeting state standards for physical education. Funds may also support staff and teacher training and education.



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- **Surplus items available for free** – The State Department of Education has two surplus items available to donate to the first school district or charter school that responds. If you would like one of these items, please contact Brandon Phillips at [BCPhillips@sde.idaho.gov](mailto:BCPhillips@sde.idaho.gov).
  - Electric Bulk 3 Hole Punch: Heavy duty commercial grade electric bulk 3 Hole Punch, good working condition, punches up to 500 pages, comes with sharpener and extra bits. 52" Tall 20" Wide 32" Long
  - Electric Bulk Paper cutter: Print shop quality heavy duty electric bulk paper cutter, good working condition, cuts up to 500 pages, comes with extra blade. 59" Tall 39" Wide 28" Long

### REMINDERS (GO TO TOP)

- **Alternative Authorization deadline** – The Professional Standards Commission Authorization Committee will be conducting a meeting to approve Alternative Authorization – Teacher to New Certificate district requests on **August 11, 2008**. If you have questions, please contact Cina Oravez at (208) 332-6936 or [CLOravez@sde.idaho.gov](mailto:CLOravez@sde.idaho.gov). Please submit complete application packets to Cina Oravez, Alternative Authorization Coordinator, prior to this date. You can mail applications to:  
State Department of Education  
ATTN: Cina Oravez  
PO Box 83720  
Boise, ID 83720-0027  
Boise, ID 83720-0027
- **IBEDS codes** – The listing of 2008-2009 IBEDS Endorsements to IBEDS Assignment Codes are now available online at <http://www.sde.idaho.gov/datacollection/ibeds/>. The listing will be a useful tool for school officials to use in assigning/staffing their programs this fall.
- **ACT Testing dates** – ACT announced its testing dates for the 2008-2009 and 2009-2010 school years. The dates and registration information is now available at <http://www.actstudent.org/>.
- **Attendance and Enrollment workshops** – Here is the schedule of workshops:

Thursday, August 7th	Boise	Barbara Morgan Conference Room, 650 W. State, Boise
Friday, August 8th	Boise	Barbara Morgan Conference Room, 650 W. State, Boise
Tuesday, August 12th	Idaho Falls	Taylorview Jr High, 350 Castlerock Ln, Idaho Falls
Wednesday, August 13th	Pocatello	Pocatello District Office Board Room, 3115 Pole Line Rd Pocatello
Thursday, August 14th	Jerome	Summit Elementary, 200 West 10th Street, Jerome
Monday, August 18th	Coeur d'Alene	Midtown Meeting Room, 1505 N 5th Street, Coeur d'Alene
		Lewiston District Office Board Room, 3317 12th Street, Lewiston
Tuesday, August 19th	Lewiston	Lewiston

For more information, please visit <http://www.sde.idaho.gov/financeandtechnology/default.asp> and click on the "Attendance and Enrollment Workshop" link listed under "Training" in the column to the right of the page.



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- **Hispanic Education Summit** – The Idaho Summit on Educational Excellence for Hispanic Students will be held July 24-25, 2008 at Boise State University in Boise. This event will provide educators, community leaders, policy makers, and interested members of the public with a forum for networking and exchanging information about current education issues and needs within Idaho's Hispanic community. Registration is \$25 per person. Scholarships are available. Visit [http://www2.state.id.us/icha/menus/education\\_summit.asp](http://www2.state.id.us/icha/menus/education_summit.asp) to register online. If you have questions, please contact Lymaris Blackmon at the Idaho Commission on Hispanic Affairs at (208) 334-3776.
- **Oregon Trail Learning Experience** – The Idaho chapter of the Oregon-California Trail Association invites all Idaho educators to participate in the 2008 convention of the Oregon-California Trail Association. The convention will be held August 4-9, 2008 at the Nampa Civic Center in Nampa. University credit is. Registration information is posted at [www.idahooccta.org](http://www.idahooccta.org) or you can contact Cathy Bournier with the Division of Tourism Development at (208) 334-2470 for more information.

### UPCOMING DEADLINES (GO TO TOP)

- **Aug. 7, 2008** – The Annual Superintendents' Meeting will be held at the Meridian School District offices in Meridian. To register, please visit <http://www.sde.idaho.gov/site/administrators.htm>.
- **Aug. 8, 2008** – The New Superintendents' Meeting will be held at the State Department of Education offices in Boise. To register, please visit <http://www.sde.idaho.gov/site/administrators.htm>.
- **Aug. 29, 2008** – The deadline to submit applications for Safe Routes to School funding to the Idaho Transportation Department. For more information, visit [www.itd.idaho.gov](http://www.itd.idaho.gov) and click on "Safe Routes to School."
- **Sept. 30, 2008** – The deadline to submit nominations for Idaho Teacher of the Year to the State Department of Education. Applications for the 2009 Idaho Teacher of the Year are now available on the State Department of Education's Web site at [www.sde.idaho.gov/TeacheroftheYear](http://www.sde.idaho.gov/TeacheroftheYear). Please note that the Idaho Teacher of the Year application is the same as the application for the National Teacher of the Year.